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Bush stresses CIA experience in Omaha campaign talk

By C. David Kotok

OMAHA — Against the background of Americans being held hostage in Iran, George Bush stressed his experience as former CIA director when he brought his campaign for the Republican presidential nomination here Tuesday morning. Bush gave his approval to Carter's decision on Monday to stop purchases of Iranian oil.

Declining additional comment on the Iranian crisis, Bush said he has long held strong feelings that U.S. foreign policy under Carter has failed to support friends overseas and that the nation's credibility has been diminished.

In his lengthy resume, Bush cites his experiences as former U.N. ambassador, ambassador to China, chairman of the National Republican Party, Texas congressman and businessman. But Tuesday morning, he reminded a crowd of more than 200 that as CIA director he saw the world "not as I would like it to be, but as it is."

His experience as director of the CIA is no longer a negative factor in his campaign for the Republican nomination, Bush said. It has strengthened his resolve for the nation to be strong in its intelligence-gathering capacity.

Mainstream positions

While acknowledging Ronald Reagan as a clear leader in the Republican race, Bush said he would overtake the front-runner with strong showings in the

Iowa caucuses and early New England primaries.

Bush said he has already made believers of political commentators with his strong showing in Iowa and Maine straw polls.

Bush came to the \$125-a-person fund-raising breakfast in the midst of a swing through Iowa, which begins the delegate selection process with its January caucuses.

Bush took positions that were clearly in the mainstream of the Republican party. He promised an end to inflation through a curb on federal spending and an end to overregulation of industry.

However, during a press conference, Bush refused to say what regulations he would curtail if elected president. With Omaha trucking-firm owner Richard Herrhan by his side, Bush said he had not decided on whether trucking would be one of the areas he would like to see deregulated. Herrman, who was active in Richard Nixon's and Gerald Ford's campaigns, is on Bush's national steering committee.

In calling for a tax cut, Bush rejected the across-the-board reductions that have been urged by other Republican candidates. He said a \$20 billion tax cut divided equally between individuals and businesses should be geared strictly toward incentives for investments.

'Not inflationary'

Such a tax cut would not be inflationary, Bush said, and would be part of his overall plan to bring inflation under control. With his experience in foreign affairs, Bush spent most of his time before the Omaha Republican audience advocating a stronger foreign policy geared to keeping the nation's commitment overseas.

He said the Carter administration went too far in meeting Chinese demands in exchange for recognition. He said the U.S. commitment to Taiwan should have been maintained or exchanged for something tangible.

To provide foreign leadership, Bush said, he would not be "a saber-rattling president."

Although the use of U.S. armed forces and paramilitary forces overseas to combat Soviet subversion would be maintained as an option, Bush said, he could not say when or how the nation's military would be used to counter the Russians in various parts of the world.

He also said he opposes stationing of American troops or bases in the Middle East to guarantee the peace between Israel and its Arab neighbors.

David Tews, finance chairman of the Bush campaign in

Nebraska, said the crowd for the Tuesday event exceeded his expectations. Tews said the money would be channeled into Bush's national campaign and would not be saved for the campaign in Nebraska's May 13 primary.